

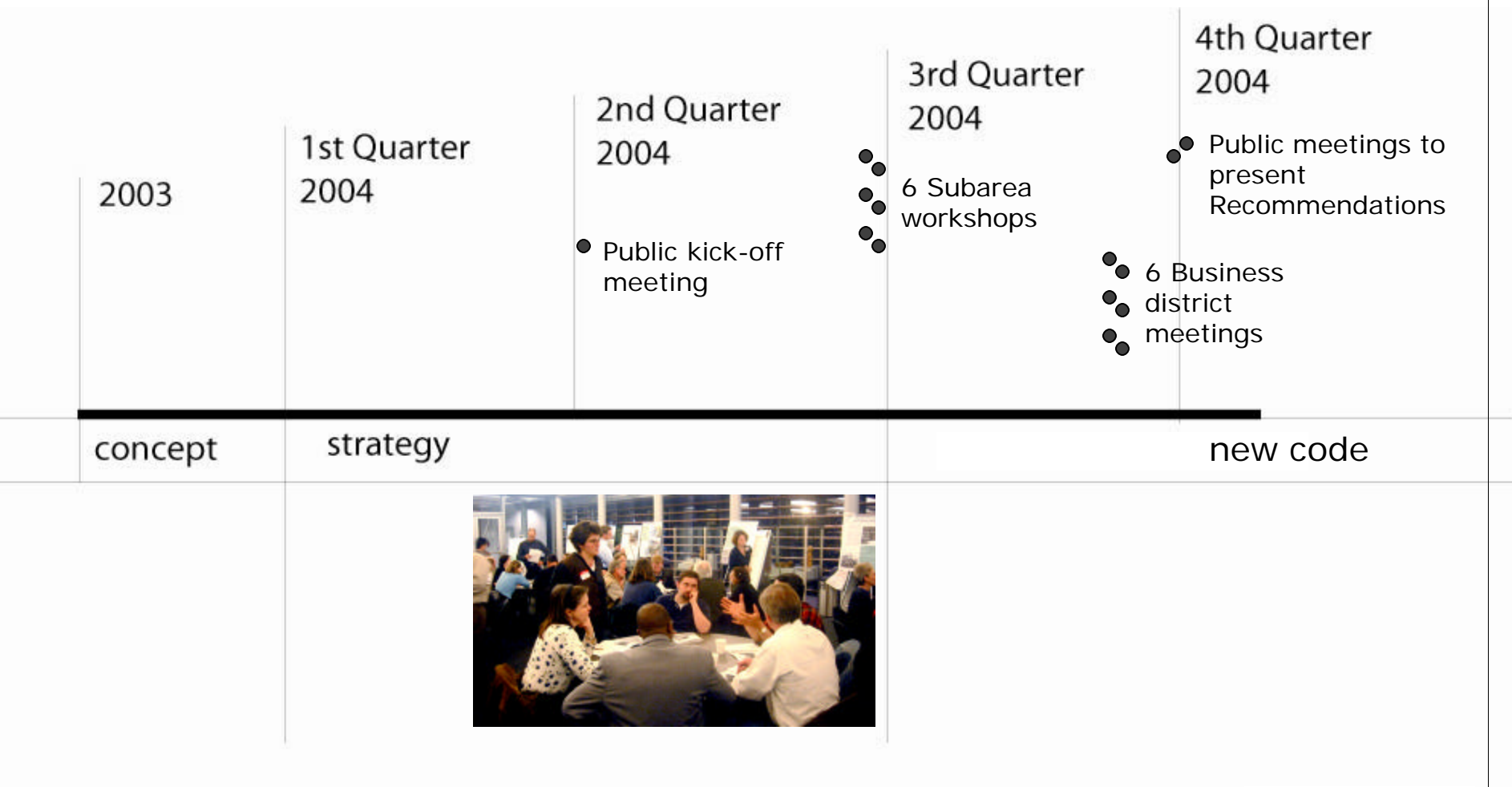


Strengthening Neighborhood Business Districts



Department of Planning and Development
City of Seattle, Greg Nickels, Mayor

					2009
				Late 1990's	
			1994		
					
1981	1986				
Work begins writing current code	Current code adopted	Comprehensive Plan Adopted	Neighborhood Planning	Frequent code amendments	Mass transit operations begin in Seattle
		Design Review Begins			



- Admiral Planning Coalition
- City Neighborhood Council
- Columbia City Chamber of Commerce
- Delridge Neighborhoods District Council
- Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce
- Greenwood/Phinney Ridge Chamber of Commerce
- International Special Review District Board
- Lake City Chamber of Commerce
- Neighborhood District Council
- North Districts Stewardship Committee
- Northgate Stakeholders Group
- Pioneer Square Preservation Board
- Seattle Planning Commission
- SLUFAN

- A Code that strengthens urban village concept
- B More active, vibrant, pedestrian-friendly neighborhood business districts
- C Easier-to-use code



- A No rezoning from or to residential or industrial zones
- B No significant changes in height, bulk, expected densities
- C No changes to the primary role of commercial zones: conducting business and providing goods and services
- D No changes to basic protections such as setbacks from residential zones, or nuisance regulations, such as noise and odor.

NC1

NC2

NC3

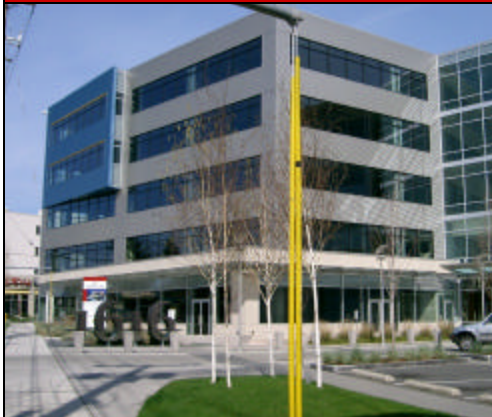
- Allows range of pedestrian-oriented retail, entertainment, and commercial service establishments
- Encourages mixed-use buildings
- Allows residential uses

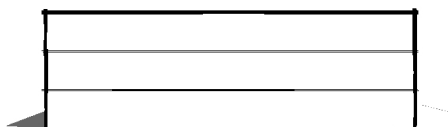


C1

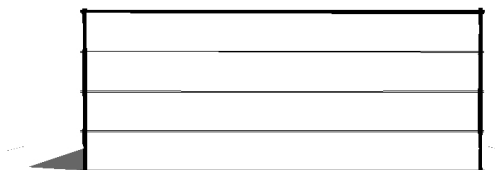
C2

- Accommodates auto-oriented and more intensive commercial uses, such as auto retail, wholesale and warehouse uses, and light manufacturing
- Residential uses are allowed in C1 and are discouraged in C2 zones

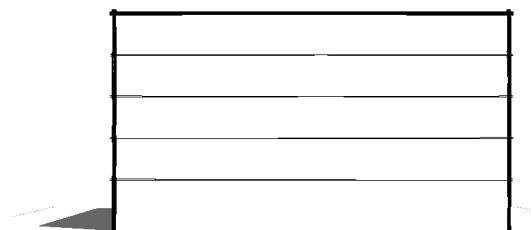




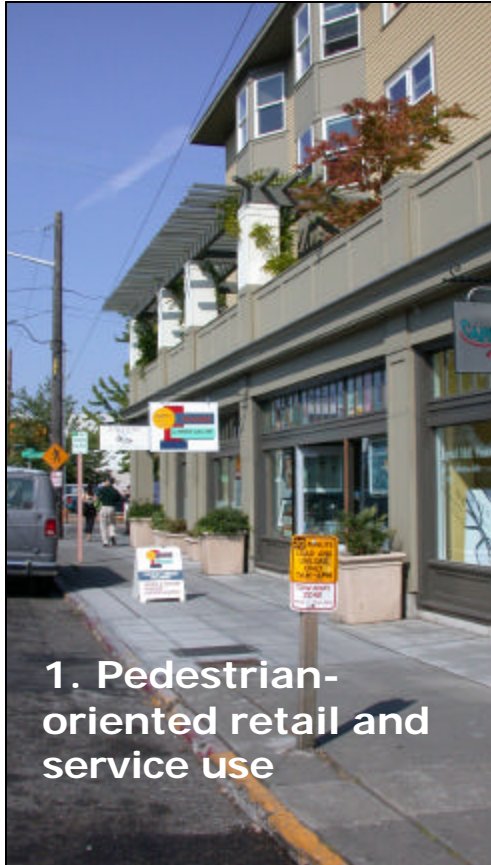
30 ft limit



40 ft limit



65 ft limit



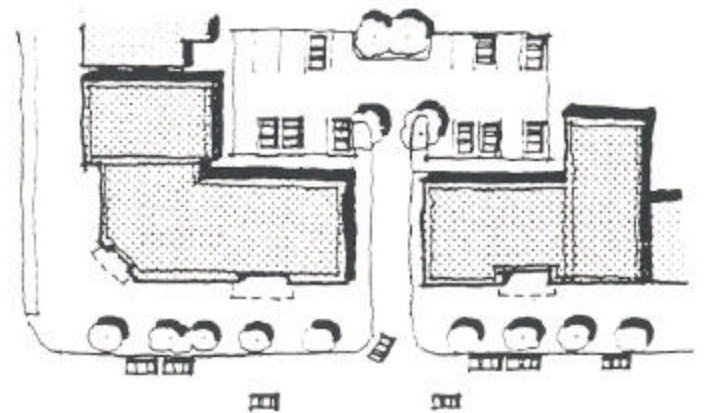
1. Pedestrian-oriented retail and service use



2. Transparency & Blank Facades

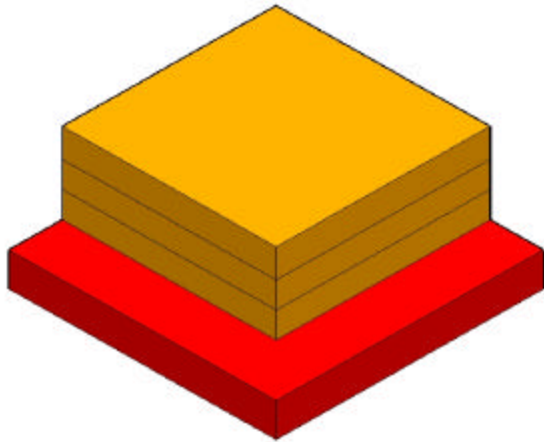
3. Parking Quantity

4. Parking Location

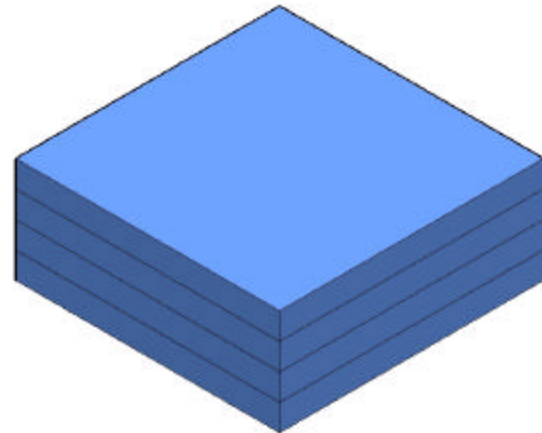


- **Add Floor Area Ratio (FAR) limits for all uses, rather than the current 64% upper-level lot coverage requirement**

- 64% applies only to residential portion of mixed use structures



- 64% does not apply to commercial-only structures; ground-level development standards not applicable



— **Add Floor Area Ratio (FAR) limits for all uses, rather than the current 64% upper-level lot coverage requirement**

— FAR allows more flexibility in location of massing, addressed through Design Review

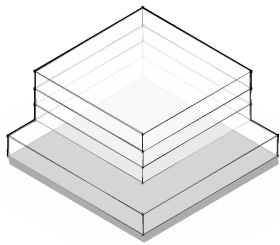
— FAR will control bulk of commercial-only buildings

— FAR replaces density limit

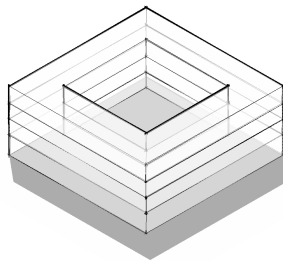


Add Floor Area Ratio (FAR) limits for all uses, rather than the current 64% upper-level lot coverage requirement

Allowed by existing code

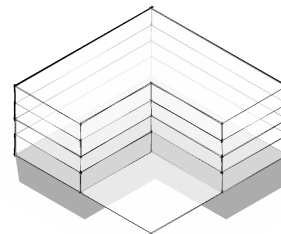


Typical building form: podium above lot line-to-lot line first floor

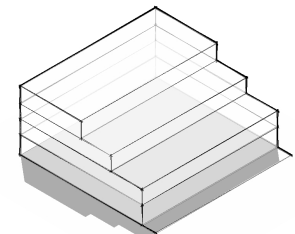


Interior courtyard with exterior walls built to the lot line

Not allowed by existing code



Ground level plaza with upper stories covering more than 64% of lot



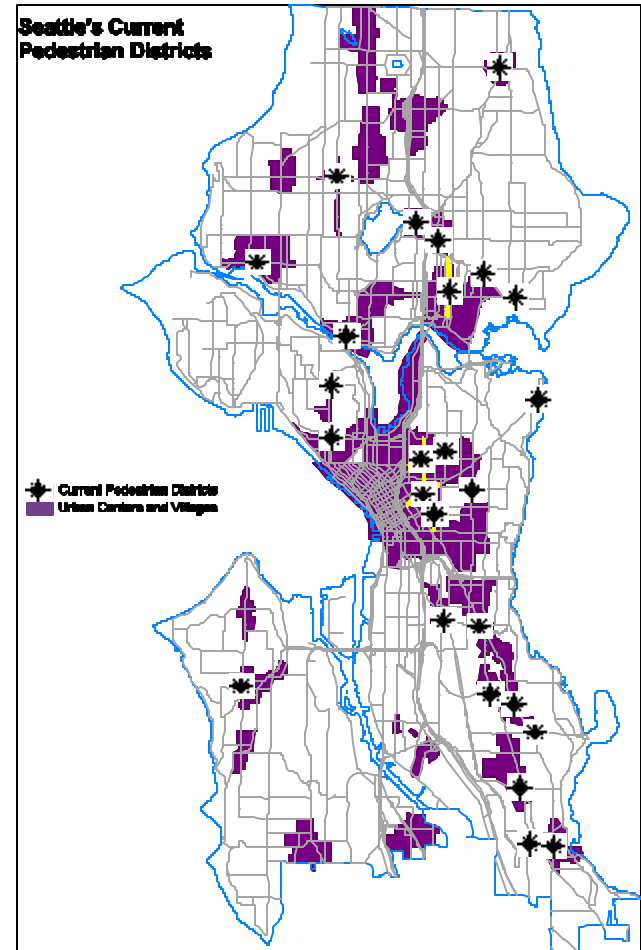
Terraced upper floors with any one upper floor covering more than 64% of lot

- Require residential amenity areas in an amount equal to 10 percent of the gross floor area of residential use
- Allow portion of amenity area requirements to be met off-site
- Allow a broader range of spaces to qualify, including community rooms and gyms

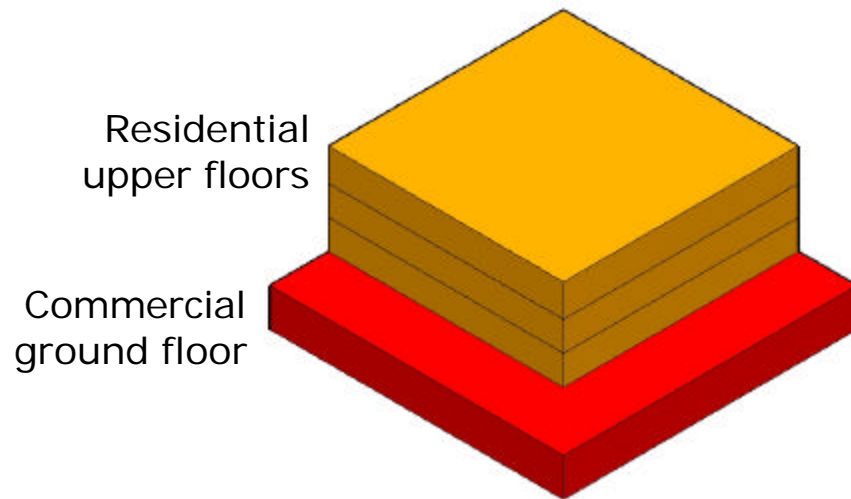


- General acceptance of the notion of being flexible about ground-level residential where appropriate.
- In commercial "nodes" we must be careful and appropriately require commercial and retail uses at ground level.
- Some participants want retail-only nodes; others want to be more flexible about the types of commercial uses allowed at ground level.
- In some neighborhoods, more depth of commercial zoning is desired or needed (esp. areas zoned in "strips"), and more density surrounding the commercial core is necessary to support businesses.

- Adopt one Pedestrian designation (current P1 and P2 designations will be re-designated “Pedestrian”)



Incentives for mixed-use buildings, while successful, also can result in vacant and underutilized commercial spaces at ground level



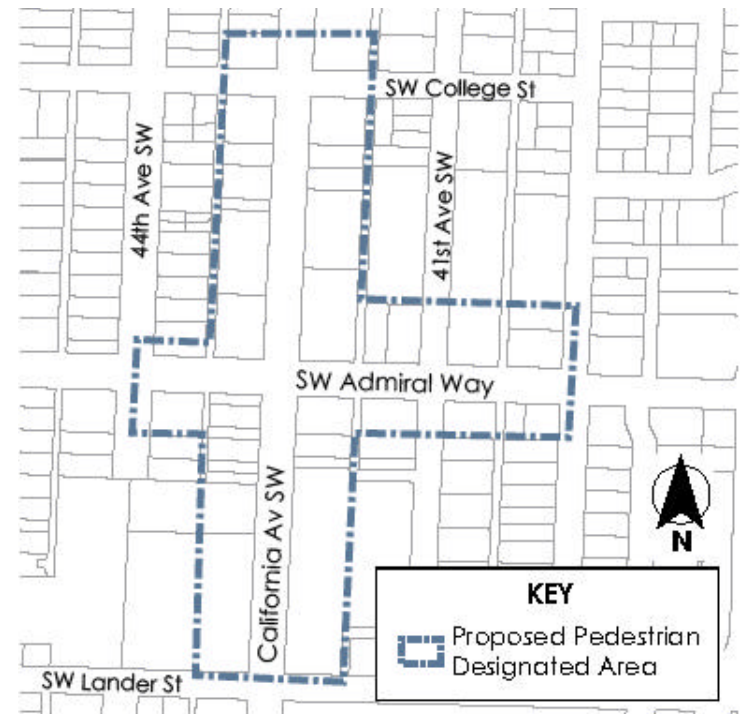
- Allow residential uses at ground level outside of P-designations (with exceptions)



Establish or expand P-designated areas initially in six neighborhoods:

- Admiral
- Columbia City
- Eastlake
- East Madison Business District
- Greenwood
- Lake City

Examine other business districts & bring forward rezone recommendations in 2006

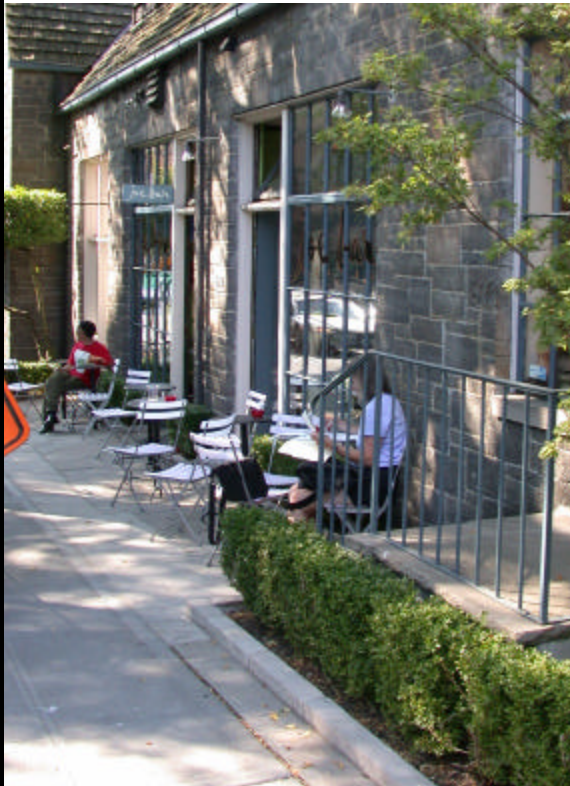


- Broaden the range of uses that qualify for street level use.



- Consolidate list of uses.
- Simplify size of use requirements.
- Allow more flexibility when a new use locates in an existing structure that doesn't meet current code requirements.





Sidewalk cafes
create interest
and activity



Well-
designed
storefronts
make a big
difference



Wide
sidewalks,
trees, street
furniture
part of the
equation



Blank facades
don't help



Buildings at
the front lot
line can result
in too narrow
of sidewalks



Parking lots on corners make
the pedestrian environment
uncomfortable

- Make pedestrian designation standards apply in all NC zones:
 1. limit the setback of buildings from the sidewalk
 2. prohibit parking between the building and the street



– Make pedestrian designation standards apply in all NC zones:

3. reduce the presence of blank walls along the pedestrian street

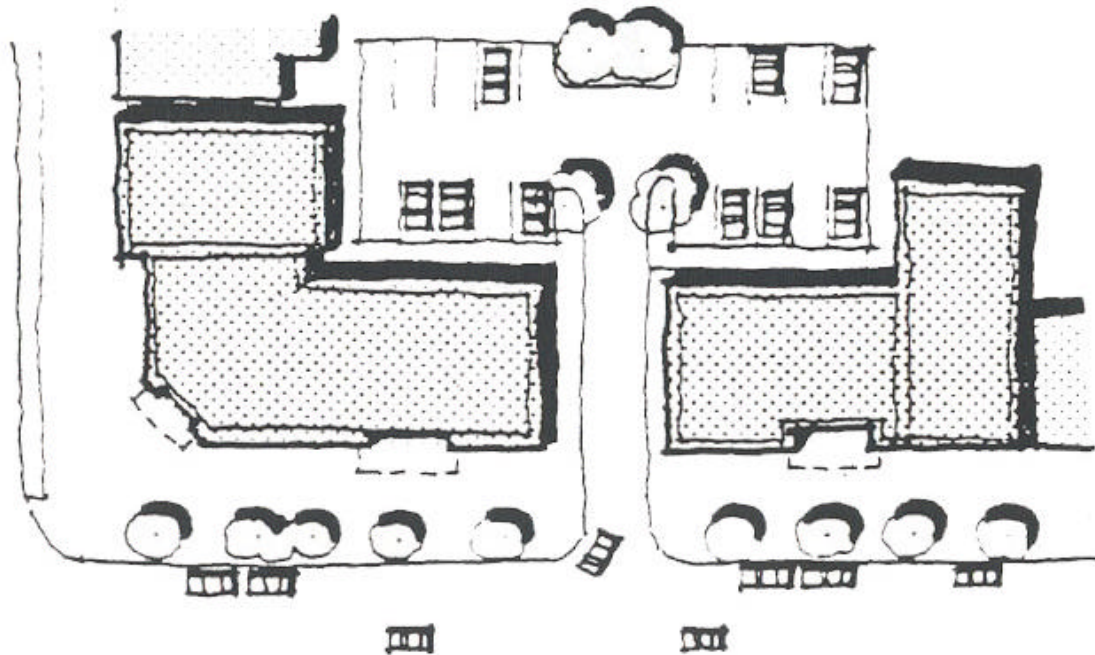
4. require street-level transparency (windows) for commercial uses



– Maintain
minimum
commercial
space
standards for
viable
businesses

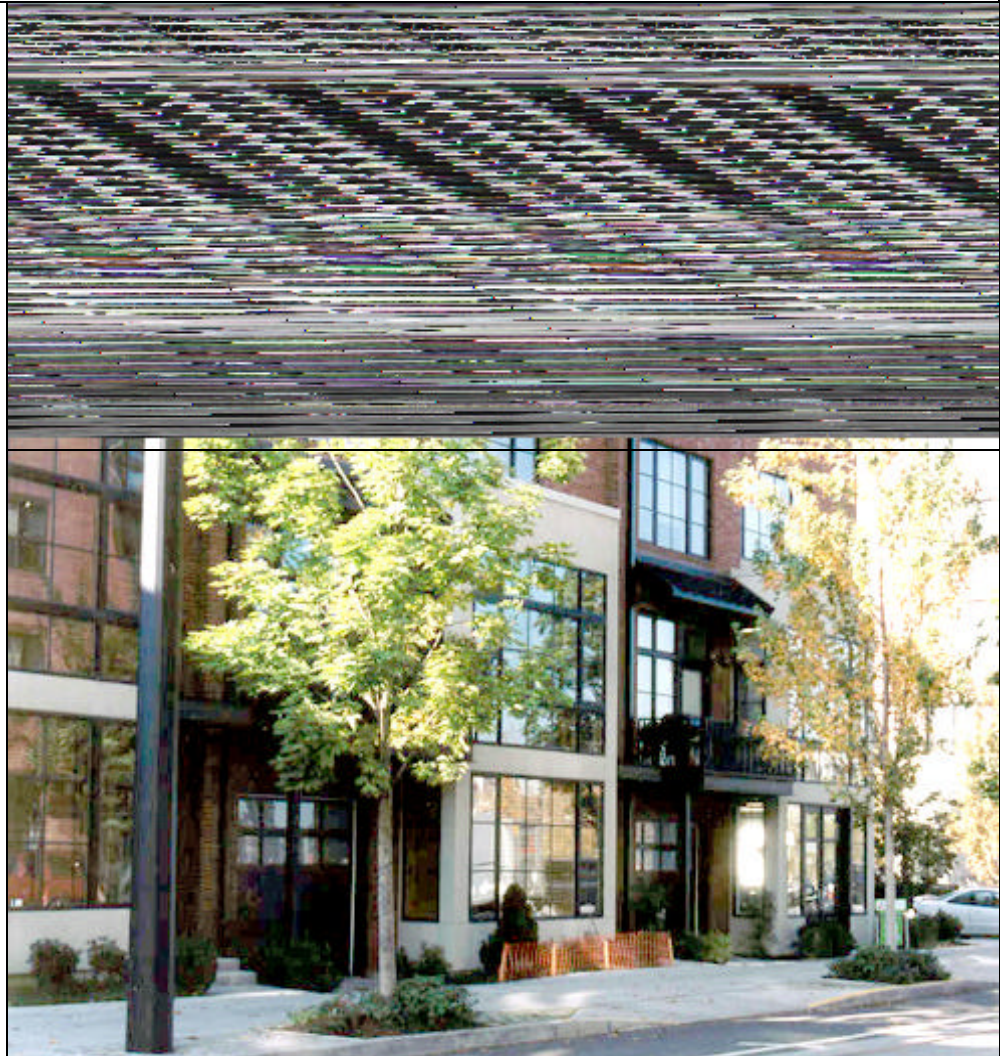


Prohibit parking lots from being located on corners and limit the number of driveways across sidewalks in neighborhood commercial zone



– Further improve the pedestrian environment:

1. Encourage the appearance of multiple storefronts through revised Design Guidelines
2. Require pedestrian-oriented entrances on residential streetfronts



- Further improve the pedestrian environment:
 3. Grant small amount of extra height for visually prominent residential entrances, such as “grand stairways” or stoops



From auto-oriented



To transit-supportive



- General understanding of the complexity and difficulty of regulating parking
- Some see the City having the role of ensuring free parking is available
- Others see parking as an issue that the market is responsible for, and that parking is never really "free"
- Concern about spillover impacts
- General agreement that the availability of short-term parking a key to successful business districts



DPD is often pressured to require more parking – our experience has been in places like the U-District was that people's perception was a lack of parking –we found an ample supply, however much of it was not FREE.

Perceptions v.
survey

Vacant parking
lots

Congested streets

Residential
demand in Urban
Village

Retail

Restaurants



Some lots are vacant at certain times of the day

Perceptions v.
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An oversupply of free parking encourages people to drive alone, which contributes to traffic congestion.

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2000 Census = 1 car /household

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Demand for retail parking is frequently lower than code requirements

Perceptions v.
survey

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Very successful restaurants may have higher demand while most others generate a lower demand for parking

Perceptions v.
survey

Vacant parking
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- Base parking requirements on new demand information
- Change existing parking waivers for street-level commercial in NC zones to 1,500 ft² per *business*
- Let market determine appropriate supply of parking in Urban Centers and station areas where transit is more frequent and accessible

- Support short-term versus long-term use of parking: allow shared parking among different uses
- Revise bicycle parking requirements so that they are not based on car parking requirements
- Use maximum surface parking requirements to limit large amounts of surface parking

- Transit, transit-supportive environments
- Mixed uses
- Residential Parking Zones
- Incentives to encourage transit, bus, bikes, walking, carpooling
- New Parking Pay Stations

- Downtown zones: no residential parking requirements, higher waivers for commercial space

<i>Address</i>	<i>Dwellings</i>	<i>Parking</i>
211 Lenora	107	109
2319 1 st Ave	52	57
2000 1 st Ave	70	98+105
2415 Western	115	181
2922 Western	137	199

- Market supplies amount of parking tenants demand

Businesses: Demand, Requirements

<i>Business</i>	<i>Zone</i>	<i>Spaces</i>	<i>Old</i>	<i>Demand</i>	<i>New</i>
Ballard Blossom	NC3	15	32	12 (peak)	17
Scarlet Tree	NC3 P2	29	1	9 (avg)	1
Sam's Club	C2	450	319	207 (avg)	228
Albertson's	NC3	89	69	52 (peak)	43

Market supplies amount of parking customers demand

- Require pedestrian pathways through parking lots from sidewalks to new buildings for retail uses

- Provide design guidelines to show a preference for landscaped, curbed, and well-lit pedestrian access



— Revise criteria for establishing pedestrian areas to implement neighborhood plans



Strengthening
Neighborhood
Business Districts

- Development standards
 - Bulk
 - Amenity Space
- Uses
- Pedestrian environment
- Street-front standards & guidelines
- Parking